(c) For 2004-2005, new weapons will cost approximately Rs.3.72 crores.

Approximately 7,000 AK-47s and 5.56 milimetre (mm) INSAS Rifles as well as 2,000 Carbines have to be inducted further. Total cost is estimated to be 15.55 Crores approximately.

The full induction is likely to be completed within the next 5 years, by 2009-2010.

Railway Travel Agents

†984. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise details of Railway Travel Agents and Railway Tourist Agents appointed by Government alongwith the details of the procedure of their selection;

(b) whether Government would grant the benefit of reservation to SC/ ST and regional candidates in the said appointments;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) State-wise number of the agents appointed, so far, and State-wise details of the candidates of reserved categories among them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Congested railway stations

985. SHRI M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of railway stations in the country which are highly congested due to increasing rail passengers, State-wise and zone-wise;

(b) whether Government propose to take steps to decongest these railway stations;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(e) whether Government also propose to restrict the entry of persons in railway stations who come to see off their relatives;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) A few stations which are required to handle additional traffic during festivities, melas and rallies tend to get overcrowded. These stations are mostly stations serving important towns and pilgrim centres.

(b) to (d) Expansion/Upgradation/modernization of railway stations and development of new terminals is a continuous process and the same is undertaken in accordance with laid down norms as per category of stations, traffic growth, *inter-se* priorities and availability of funds.

(e) to (g) Persons holding journey or platform tickets only are allowed to enter the platforms.

Repair of railway bridges

986. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have taken a decision to repair/reconstruct many railway bridges in Bihar and other States; which have outlived their life and are in a dilapidated condition;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) the amount of expenses thereon to be stared by the Centre and the States; and

(d) by when the work is likely to start and be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) Indian Railways have well laid down multi-tier schedule of annual inspections of bridges and each bridge is inspected atleast once in a year. Based on the results of these inspections rebuilding/ rehabilitation of bridges is taken up on age-cum-condition basis.

The details of bridges are maintained Railway zone-wise and not State-wise. There are total 4886 bridges sanctioned for rehabilitation/ rebuilding as on 01.04.04 on Indian Railway covering 16 zonal Railways. Railway-wise details of sanctioned bridge works is given below. The work